**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**BASIC EDUCATION PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE EXTENDS DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS ON BASIC EDUCATION LAWS BILL**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 29 June 2022 –** The Portfolio Committee on Basic Education Portfolio Committee on Basic Education has extended the deadline for stakeholders and interested individuals to submit written comments on the Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Bill to 15 August 2022.

Committee Chairperson Ms Bongiwe Mbinqo-Gigaba said the committee received several requests for an extension to the deadline, which was 15 June 2022. “The committee noted several factors that could have impacted the public not having sufficient time to comment on the Bill, like it being an examination period. As the committee appreciates public input and wants to ensure legislation that speaks to the needs and wants of the sector, we decided to heed the calls for the extension of the deadline.”

The Bill proposes to amend the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996, and the Employment of Educators Act (EEA) of 1998, so as to align them with developments in the education landscape and to ensure that systems of learning are put in place in a manner that gives effect to the right to basic education enshrined in section 29(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.

Amongst other things, the Bill seeks to amend certain definitions, to provide that attendance of Grade R is compulsory and to provide for system improvements in terms of admission of learners to public schools. It also provides for financial and public accountability frameworks for governing bodies and provincial departments. The Bill further provides the Minister with additional regulatory powers and enhances Heads of departments’ and Members of executive councils’ decision-making and oversight powers.

The Bill further proposes technical and substantive adjustments, clarifies certain existing provisions, inserts provisions not provided for in existing legislation and strengthens enforcement mechanisms for offences and penalties.

Any person or organisation wishing to submit written comments is at liberty to direct submission for attention: Mr Llewellyn Brown, the Committee Secretary, via email: belabill02@parliament.gov.za or online at <https://forms.gle/MoC6AdbdQyYPk3Y49> or via WhatsApp: +27 60 550 9848. Mr Llewellyn Brown can be reached on 083 709 8450 for enquiries. The Bill is accessible at: <https://www.parliament.gov.za/bill/2300398>

Written submissions must reach Parliament by no later than 15 August 2022 at 16:00. In addition to written submissions, kindly indicate if you would like to make oral submissions. All correspondence should be addressed to Mrs BP Mbinqo-Gigaba, Chairperson: PC on Basic Education and marked for the attention of Mr LA Brown. In your submission, kindly provide the name, surname, telephone number, and email address of the person or organisation submitting the comments.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION, MS BONGIWE MBINQO-GIGABA.**

For media enquiries or interviews with the Chairperson, please contact the committee’s Media Officer:
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